

Marine Safety Office Houston-Galveston
Marine Safety Unit Galveston
Vessel Traffic Service Houston

Port Security Information Bulletin
PSIB 25-03

Securing Vessel Boarding Ladders
August 27, 2003

In an effort to harden the port against terrorist attack, the U.S. Coast Guard conducts routine patrols of the Houston Ship Channel and surrounding waterways. Ensuring that access points to ships is one of the preventative measures usually employed to protect the port. This includes securing all vessel boarding ladders on the weather deck when not in use. Analysis of the data gathered by US Coast Guard patrols indicates that unsecured boarding ladders, hanging over the sides of vessels, are common discrepancies.

Unsecured boarding ladders are those not constantly manned or observed by vessels' crews. These unsecured ladders could potentially allow unauthorized personnel to gain access with intent to do harm to a vessel. Limiting access points helps to ensure the safety of the vessels, their crews, and the port.

For additional information regarding activities considered suspicious in the vicinity of waterfront facilities and vessels as well as other port infrastructure, see MSO Houston-Galveston's PSIB 07-03. An electronic version of PSIB 07-03 is available on our web site: <http://www.uscg.mil/msohoustongalveston>.

Nonconformity with this PSIB may lead to Captain of the Port Orders issued against the vessel, with a possible fine not to exceed \$27,500 per offense per day.

The Department of Homeland Security encourages individuals to report information concerning such suspicious activity to their local FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) Office, <http://www.fbi.gov/contact/fo/fo.htm>, Department of Homeland Security (NIPC) Watch and Warning Unit at (202) 323-3205, toll free at 1-888-585-9078, or by email to nipc.watch@fbi.gov.

The U.S. Coast Guard reminds the maritime industry that they may also report information concerning suspicious activity to the National Response Center (NRC) via the NRC 24-hour telephone number at 1-800-424-8802.

RICHARD M. KASER
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Captain of the Port